



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

FEBRUARY 2017 VOLUME 8 ISSUE 2

\$1

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INSIDE

- Celebrations & changes – p. 2
- For the love of stories – p. 3
- Mercy House Christmas – p. 3
- Positively Boober – p. 4
- Mixed-income housing – p. 5
- Marchers flood Michigan – p. 6
- Puzzles – p. 8
- Veteran care assistance – p. 9
- Corporate denial – p. 10
- Out of the wilderness – p. 11
- Chocolate sheet cake – p. 12



Celebrations and changes



It is no coincidence that **International Street Paper Vendor Week**, February 6-12, comes at the coldest time of the year, when the grind of winter is wearing people down. Worldwide, this is the hardest time for the folks selling street papers to entice their customers to brave the elements to make a purchase and possibly have a conversation.

This year we will facilitate conversation by holding a **customer-vendor mixer at the Groundcover News office on Thursday, February 9, from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.** You will be able to get to know many of our vendors and volunteers,



GROUND COVER

MISSION:

*Creating opportunity and a voice
for low-income people while tak-
ing action to end homelessness and
poverty.*

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If the weather is not too frigid during Vendor Week, you might see balloons dancing from our vendors' arms as they sell. And keep an eye out for our guest vendors, including Ypsilanti Mayor Amanda Edmonds, Jamie Morris (former University of Michigan running back), State Representative Yousef Rabhi and Ann Arbor City Council members Chuck Warpehoski and Jason Frenzel.

As the weather changes, so will the cover price for the monthly editions of Groundcover News. It will go up to \$2, starting in March. This increase will help our vendors better meet their needs and further support the administration of the organization. The cost to vendors is increasing from 25 cents to 50 cents, which will enable the Groundcover organization to stay financially viable.

Our recent customer survey responses indicated that the vast majority of cus-

tomers would be happy to support this increase. There also are a few changes in the paper layout and content that reflect reader survey responses. There are more articles about vendors and other low-income people and experiences, the Cryptoquote has been discontinued and the layout has been refined to better organize content.

Another change is that our vendors will soon be selling subscriptions for delivery by mail. Customers can sign up for one or more years and credit the sale to the vendor of their choice. Payment can be made by check, or by PayPal or credit card using the Donate button on our website.

Valentine's Day comes hot on the heels on Vendor Week. On this day celebrating love, we'd do well to extend our love to those who might otherwise have no one with whom to share the day. Many of our Groundcover vendors fall into this category. So do many of our parents and friends who have lost a spouse or loved one.

When I was a child, my father used to get gifts for my sister and me – as well as my mother – on Valentine’s Day. When my mother passed, I returned the favor and remembered him on

I read a beautiful prayer dedicated to those who have died. It exhorted the reader to let the person go, but in the event that was not yet possible, to incorporate them into the reader's sight. In other words, expand consciousness and empathy to include what they would have seen. What a beautiful way to grow and bring us closer to one world, especially if we can do that with others who are still here with us.

In that spirit, I offer you one of the many jokes my father collected to share in Toastmaster speeches and other appropriate moments:

A businessman died shortly after a long vacation. At the wake, a friend said, "I can't believe he's dead – he looks so good."

Another friend responded, “He should look good – he just came back from Florida!”



Celebrate
**INTERNATIONAL
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with us!

Drop in at our office
**Thursday 2/9 between
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Socialize and snack with
vendors and volunteers!

Get Ready...

**The suggested
donation for a
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Groundcover News
is rising to \$2**

Starting March 2017

For the love of stories



by **Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell**
Groundcover Contributor

Valentine's Day is a good occasion to consider what you love. I love stories. I can't imagine a life without books. I am an avid fan of reading aloud. Once when I was moving, a friend who carried many boxes of books into my new home simply commented, "Well, Martha, there is no question, books are an important part of your sense of treasure." That love of stories has consistently spilled over for me into engagement with efforts involving kids and literacy.

There was a season during my long years of ministry in Saint Louis that included both the inner city church that I served and a neighborhood non-profit that I directed with its 19 afterschool

programs. At some point during the week, I could be found at Clay Elementary School in the midst of a circle of readers gathered in the hallway as we made our way through one Newbery Award book winner or honor book after another. Years before that I read in both of my daughters' classrooms until they aged out of having mom come to school to read.

My church here in northern Illinois actively participates in the DeKalb/Sycamore Bookcase Project. Every spring, 50 children from a local Head Start program each receive a bookcase with a nameplate bearing their name and a starter set of books. Many of these preschool children are living in homes where there are no books until their bookcases arrive. The books are donated by different groups across the county.

At Mayfield UCC we collect several hundred books each February and dedicate them on the Sunday closest to

March 2, Dr. Seuss' birthday. The wood and other materials for the bookcases are purchased with the proceeds from an annual Bookcase Project banquet, and then the bookcases are built by area volunteers. The project culminates early each May. Children and their families are invited to a festive event in a large hall where the children search with enthusiasm for the bookcase identified by their name.

I listened with delight last fall to an account on NPR of a creative kids' literacy program in Ypsilanti. It is a very simple concept. At the Fuller Cut, a barber shop that includes many young African American boys among their clients, kids receive a two-dollar discount from the barber for reading aloud during their haircuts and answering some comprehension questions. There is a diverse pile of books for them to choose from at the shop. Area teachers compliment the barbers on the impact their efforts are having throughout the school year.

One barber named Ryan read about a program like this at a Harlem, New York barbershop. Within a very short time, with the support of his boss, he got the Fuller Cut habit of reading to your barber underway. Barber shop literacy programs can be found in other cities like Columbus, Ohio; Houston, Texas; and Dubuque, Iowa. Ryan dreams that someday, one of their reading clients will grow up to be a writer or journalist. He has no doubt young boys are laying the foundation for a stronger future by reading to their barbers.

My love of stories is one of the ways by which I try to give back to and strengthen my community. What do you love that might translate into your participation and service in neighborhood, town, city or county? Whatever repairs and enhances the common good benefits us all. Actions don't have to be complicated or costly to make a substantial difference. Take that basic truth from me. Or take it from an area barber.

Mercy House Christmas Party of love, joy, gratitude, and compassion

by **William W. Shakespeare**
Groundcover Contributor

December 25, 2016 was a cold day in Ann Arbor. Most of the students were gone for the winter break. However, the city was not empty of towners and fun events. It was Christmas Day! The Christmas spirit is felt by so many individuals and families, regardless of faith or spirituality. In Ann Arbor, Mercy excludes no one. The wise men and women do say, "No one should be alone for Christmas."

The Mercy House Christmas Party is a story of love, joy, gratitude, friendship and compassion. It is also a story of inclusion, diversity, and abundance. With the assistance of many organizations and community partners, the Mission-Mercy House Community Group has been able to throw huge Christmas parties three years in a row for anyone in town, including the poor, the homeless and the most vulnerable members of our Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti metropolitan region. Tipping the hat to Charles Dickens, one might say, "It was the best of times, not the worst of times." It felt like a family. A Tale of One City! Much like Bob Marley's "One World, One Love, One Heart!"

In both 2015 and 2016, more than 250 guests attended the Mercy House Christmas party. There were Christmas carols and other sing-a-long lyrics. There were variety of delicious meals served, including breakfast and dinner.



This volunteer family contributed steaks from Chicago to the Christmas meal at Mercy House and helped distribute presents before taking their leave.

The Christmas tree was decorated with ornaments of jingling bells and shining brass. Two bands entertained the guests from dawn to dusk.

Loads of donations came from Masco Corporation, St. Mary Students Parish, First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor, Harvest Community Church of Ann Arbor, The Free Methodist Church of Chelsea, Knox Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Temple Beth Emeth-St. Clare's Episcopal Church, and a host of other churches and individuals. We had an army of volunteers from so many churches and corporations.

The Christmas gifts that the guests

received were practical and rewarding. One guest, Kelly, said she was happy to receive some winter gloves, a hat, personal care products, clothes, and a 5-dollar Starbucks gift card. Another guest, Rob, expressed a lot of joy when he was able to get a sleeping bag for his tent, which gets very cold when the temperature drops. A homeless youth, Keisha, attended the party with another friend. She just smiled

all day. When asked what she thought about the party, she said, "I am so happy. I'm speechless!"

Her sentiment captured the true essence of the grand Christmas Party of 2016 at Ann Arbor's Mercy House. Charles Dickens, the author of *A Christmas Tale*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Oliver Twist*, and several iconic novels about poverty, inequality, orphans, homeless youth and shattered lives, would tremble with delicious bliss to know that in so many ways, Ann Arbor, on Christmas Day, became a tale of one city – united in gratitude, joy, abundance, friendship, love and compassion. We hope that our diverse guests were able to say, "That was a party to remember!!!"

Contributed by Will Shakespeare, a Community Engagement Volunteer, a Public Policy Analyst, and a Research Associate at the Mission-Mercy House Community Organization.

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Positivity, meditation, gratitude, kindness and diet lead to Boober success

by Kevin Spangler
Groundcover Vendor #307

We want to be better but we just sometimes do not know how. That's because we are not focusing on how to get better; we are focusing on the stuff that brings us down.

Every day I try to improve myself and to help the people around me. So I am going to share some simple things to direct you to a path that it has taken my whole life to put together.

Healthy habits

Be conscious of your thoughts and appreciate them. If you have negative thoughts you need to crumple them in a big ball, throw them on the ground and stomp on them like the excrement they literally are.

Always try to fill yourself with positive thoughts. When you catch yourself in a negative thought spiral, think about the favorite thing you did last summer or something else that is positive. Find something in your life and appreciate it. No matter what's going on in your life, there is something positive and you need to focus on that to receive more positive energy.

Be conscious of the foods you eat. Over the years I have tried many styles of eating and have concluded that a 90-percent raw food diet is the best for me. Whenever I can, I stick to the slow food movement. Eat local produce and know your farmer.

Drink water, but just not any water. The



Boober pedicab owner Kevin Spangler shares winning habits.

only water I drink is distilled water with sole water added. Sole water (pronounced *so-lay*) has 90 trace minerals that we do not get in our food sources anymore. I also suggest adding crystals. I use rose quartz.

As a child I suffered a traumatic brain injury, so I have done research on this topic and found that heavy breathing and the vowels *aeiou* heal the brain. That led me to doing the vocal meditation "*Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*." I attribute my successes and future successes to this daily meditation.

Be grateful and do gratitude journaling before bed. Try this for 33 days. Before bed write three things you are grateful for and don't repeat the same thing, but

read your whole list every night.

Practicing acts of kindness is way to feel good about yourself. The things I do most often are holding the door open for people and always trying to pick up trash around me. I do many more such things.

Get your blood pumping at least three to five times each week. I find exercise to be very important to feeling better. Getting the proper recovery for the body is also important.

Boober Tours update

The first of the four-part budgeting class was a success. I gathered enough chairs and tables for the event. I now have the rough-draft business plan and

the visioning of the future done. Setting up for the class has helped me to organize better in many ways.

I went to a vision workshop held by Optimize that was awesome. I was able to get a handle on some things and overcome some blocks and met some amazing, powerful people for future networking.

I now have also teamed up with Wash-tenaw Recovery Advocacy Program (WRAP). We had a showing of *Anonymous People*, which is a great documentary explaining the problems recovering addicts face. The event went well. I have also joined with recovery-infused yoga to start and plan a healing center. Thanks to a sponsor, I am also taking a Dave Ramsey financial course that is being held at Menlo Innovations.

Many thanks to the two anonymous donors who gave \$1,000 and \$100. I also thank the many people who stopped me on the streets to let me know that they read my articles in this paper and were inspired by me. (If you are new to Groundcover, I am raising \$25,000 to build an app that will change the world by bringing people together and helping local businesses.)

If you want to donate, you can do so by check, credit card, cash and Venmo. My contact information is (734) 686-2087; the Boober Tours website is boober-tours.com and my Venmo app name is @Boober. (Please leave a comment regarding the donation's purpose.)



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Commissioners and OCED – new mixed-income housing on Platt Road

by Leonore Mohill Gerstein
Groundcover Contributor

Nestled in the southeast corner of Ann Arbor's County Farm Park are 13.5 acres of land that adjoin the park on three sides and border on Platt Road on the fourth. As the city of Ann Arbor grows, so does the need for housing, and in recent years this site has become a candidate for residential construction.

As is the case with County Farm Park, this parcel of land belongs to Washtenaw County. For several years, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners have been working toward a well-planned, mixed-income neighborhood on this plot. At the conclusion of time-consuming professional analyses and local governmental deliberations, the redevelopment project reached a watershed stage in late 2016: County Commissioners called for proposals from private developers qualified to develop a whole neighborhood to meet the County Board's specifications. All those who have worked so hard for many years to get us this far deserve our thanks, and now is a good time to have a closer look at what they have been doing.

Administrative preparations

The County Commissioners empaneled a broad advisory body, the Platt Road Community Advisory Committee, which formulated principles to guide the County Board of Commissioners (BOC) plans for the use of the land. The BOC took into account Ann Arbor's master plan and building code in defining its principles.

Six jurisdictions, the cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti among them, shaped the process in turn, by "adopt[ing] the Housing Affordability and Equity Analysis, which identifies the need for nearly 2,800 affordable housing units by 2020."

Taking that projection into account, the BOC decided that the best use of the 13 acres would be a mixed-income neighborhood. From the outset, the County dreamed of a housing development that would be "an asset to further community goals and values for the benefit of the community."

Keep in mind that while the County's goals are the bedrock of the project, the County is neither partner to the developers nor the owner of the resulting housing units. Prospective developers will seek partnerships with affordable housing funders, including the Michigan State Housing Development Authority.



Former County Commissioner Yousef Rabhi (now a state house member) delivered background information to community members, elected officials and planners at a Platt Rd. development charrette.

As the Platt Road site is on publicly-owned land, it was incumbent on the BOC to solicit the public's hopes and concerns in the initial phase. They turned to the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) to engage the public in the early planning activities. OCED chose the local design company SmithgroupJJR as their partners in the process. While staff of OCED led the meetings and workshops, known as charrettes, Smithgroup created the renderings – the final, concrete representations of the compromise vision of all participants and facilitators.

Community involvement through the charrette

A charrette is defined as "an intense collaborative and interactive design workshop that brings together design professionals, public officials and staff, and the public to develop a shared vision, plan and design for a particular location." Taking place over a few days, it is a highly compressed series of conversations, or "feedback and response loops," working toward consensus. It is a hands-on development of a plan that takes into account a planning framework and background research.

At the outset, charrette participants read and discussed the BOC's guiding principles. The Platt Road Site would:

- be integrated with the neighborhood.
- consist of mixed-income housing of different forms and densities, with the optimal number of affordable and moderately-priced units.
- include varied types of housing for people of different ages.
- encourage less use of automobiles and greater reliance on public transit, walking and biking.
- demonstrate green technologies and sustainable design.

With these principles in mind, the first day's group discussions yielded common themes (expressed as desires and needs). Participants wanted a civic community building, a community garden, the preservation of existing mature trees, a pathway connecting to the County Farm Park's trail system, and a transit stop on Platt Road. They also wanted the plans to reflect their concerns about flooding, traffic, safety and unknown future impacts.

By day three, the first day's wishes and concerns were integrated with County guidelines and brilliantly represented in four beautifully-rendered options. Community members were invited to drop by that evening to see, freely discuss and comment on the four options. Taking these comments into consideration, the planners arrived at the final phase. Participants congregated for the last time to see the final visualization (rendering) and offer comments and questions.

The resulting plan's appealing features include:

- Trees are everywhere, along with patches of lawn surrounding all the buildings.
- Park space on the western edge, which could potentially expand into the existing county park.
- The greatest housing density will be in the northern segment of the site, farthest away from the street.
- The community building, stormwater management pond and public access are on the south side, at the street's edge.

Housing will be arranged in clusters, each cluster containing several building types and density levels, including some single-family units but a greater number of linked town homes and apartment buildings, and a larger, denser building designed for seniors with both

independent and assisted living units. Residents can walk to a community building and a garden.

The planners displayed photographs of various architectural styles, all of which would meet the existing criteria for the development. The buildings in the photographs can be described as warm and inviting, reflecting traditional American neighborhoods at their typical best, with sloping roofs, front porches and contrasting siding and trim.

The charrette participants and others who are committed to the success of the project deserve our thanks. Among the charrette participants were Andy La Barre, County Commissioner for the Platt Rd. area; Rev. Donnell Wyche, minister of the nearby Vineyard Church; neighboring businesses and residents; and representatives from local affordable housing agencies. In conversation with this reporter, Commissioner Andy La Barre remarked that the inclusion of subsidized homes is a positive way to overcome the segregation of people with very little income.

In their warm letter of support, the neighborhood's Journey of Faith Christian Church wrote, "As Christians we are called to work for the good of those who have the least. Thus, we feel that affordable housing in this location would be a boon to the community."

The planned community also provides opportunities for people with somewhat greater means to own housing they can afford. La Barre pronounced the charrette process a success – though by its very nature, it leaves few people totally satisfied. He mingled with "a wide swath of people" committed to their task. "They came prepared," he said, and engaged in "robust... comprehensive" exchanges.

Another participant noted that the range of ideas expressed was broad; some people wished to have no housing on the Platt Road acreage, while others believed that this area was ideal for affordable housing in a mixed-income setting.

And what about the call for developers' proposals mentioned earlier? By the December 1 deadline, OCED's urban planners Nathan Voght and Teresa Gilotti had received six proposals that they are evaluating now. Very soon they will submit their evaluation and make a specific recommendation to the BOC. The proposed designs may be viewed at: www.plattroad.org/platt-road-proposals.

People Power - thousands across Michigan march in solidarity

by Andrew Nixon
Associate Editor

Millions of people of all ages and ethnicities marched in Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Brighton, Lansing and hundreds of other cities around the country and world in solidarity with the 500,000 or so women and allies who traveled to Washington, D.C., for the Women's March on January 21. According to data collected by Jeremy Pressman and Erica Chenoweth, these marches constitute the **largest protest in U.S. history**, with more than 3.3 million people in 500 cities across the United States and another 260,000 people in 100 international marches. For many, it was heartening to see so many declaring their allegiance to tolerance and democracy – but activists understand that this demonstration is only the first step in making a difference.

A common sentiment expressed at these mostly peaceful gatherings was a sense of community and hope that so many had been missing as they isolated after the election results.

“Like so many others, I’ve been feeling deep despair and concern for the future of our world since the election of Donald Trump,” said Caryn Simon, one march attendee from Ann Arbor. “But today’s gathering has convinced me that We the People will do whatever it takes to protect democracy and our planet from rising authoritarian forces. I think the situation has become so obviously grave that people of all stripes are coming out of the woodwork to join

the fight.”

U.S. Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (D-MI) made appearances at both the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti events, expressing her strong support for the gatherings. “Our voices are the most powerful tools we have to bring about change, and together, our voices are strong, they are mighty, and they will not be ignored!” Dingell said at the Ann Arbor rally. “This is a positive day,” Dingell said later in an interview.

“There’s a sense of community. It’s a diverse crowd. This is multi-generational, and there’s no tension here.”

Local solidarity

The recent surge in mass political action caught fire locally on MLK, Jr. Day (January 16) with a silent peace march, “Our Voices Will Be Heard,” by students of Ypsilanti High School. Leading the march was Rhea McCau-



Women marchers and allies of all ages flooded the streets of Ann Arbor on January 21. Signs promoted empowerment of women and solidarity against oppression in all its forms.

Frederick Douglass delivered a speech titled “The Perils of the Republic.”

The Silent March underscored the widespread concern of many local residents, including youth and minority groups, that many of the proposed policies under the Trump administration could pose grave threats to their civil liberties and reverse decades of hard-won progress for these demographic groups.

see LOCAL MARCHES, page 7



St. Francis of Assisi
PARISH

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“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”

(Mt 5:5)

MASS SCHEDULE

Ash Wednesday

7:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. 12:15 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

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Local marches -- Ann Arbor, Ypsi join record-number demonstrations



January 21, left to right: Ypsi march organizer Desirae Simmons speaks at the ending rally; marchers 1,000-strong fill the streets of Ypsilanti with their voices and art; (Far right) Protesters make their way down S. Division St. on route to the University of Michigan Diag.

continued from page 6

On January 21 – an afternoon aided by unseasonably fine weather – strollers and wheelchairs, students and retirees, middle-aged women and men 11,000-strong crowded the streets of Ann Arbor. The throng was so massive that the tail-end of the march didn't

reach the rally at the Diag until the event was nearly over. Long-time Ann Arbor Open School teacher Leslie Lawther commented, "My eyes just started flowing over when I saw how many other people came out today and so many of them are young, too."

At the same time in neighboring Ypsilanti, over 1,000 people joined

the Ypsi March for Love, Resilience and Action. Though smaller in size, the Ypsilanti march was a particularly powerful collective statement by a community of 20,000 whose population – Ypsi is much poorer and more racially and ethnically diverse than Ann Arbor – will likely be disproportionately affected by the Trump administration's agenda.

The march route centered around places of historic empowerment throughout Ypsilanti, a place where the ongoing battle for civil rights is woven deeply into the fabric of the community. The Ypsilanti march included a community- and resource-building fair at which marchers could connect with local groups organizing for change. The focal point for many nationally significant abolitionist, women's rights, LGBTQ and workers' union victories, Ypsilanti will be looked to as a model of how targeted communities effectively come together to build local resiliency.

At a rally following the march, organizer Mariah Zeisberg exclaimed, "We have an amazing history in this town, a radical history of working together to keep the community strong and resilient underneath domination system values. We are so grateful for the examples that our ancestors and neighbors have shared with us. We take its grace, and from that power, we will continue to champion love and freedom. All people belong in our community, and we will turn that into LAW."

Moving forward

The chanters of "Whose streets? Our streets!" and "This is what democracy looks like!" now have to make that a reality by being vigilant about what transpires politically at every level and speaking out as necessary. That means attending elected representatives' town

halls and coffees and setting up individual meetings with them on urgent issues, banding together with others to meet privately with government officials, supporting an independent press, and applying economic and social pressure to those people and entities pushing for policies that violate the common good.

That means not only voting in the mid-terms but getting allies in swing districts for both state and federal offices to turn out in large numbers and vote, in primaries as well as the general elections. For some, it means running for office.

Taking back the blogosphere and social media will be the mission of others. We all need to challenge false and inflammatory statements made anywhere.

The enthusiasm of the march must be nurtured and sustained for the long road ahead. The synergy of the people was abundantly apparent at these local marches, and group support will sustain it.

Zeisberg, in her closing remarks at the Ypsilanti rally, powerfully articulated such a vision for weathering the anticipated political storm that has only just begun:

"We invite you to participate in history, to carry the legacy forward, to join with others and to work hard to create a world that we actually want to live in," Zeisberg said. "If you can get connected to friends, to the people that bring you joy and bring you alive, if you can make sure that you are taking pleasure in your organizing activities, and you're having fun and working from your heart, then we can sustain four years of resistance!"

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16. Southeast Asian language
17. * Griffendor's seeker
19. Bouncer-turned-actor
20. Part of a citrus grove
21. Former "The Voice" judge Green
23. * "Friends" costar
26. Winningest left-handed pitcher in MLB history
29. Herald
30. Communion need
31. 1999 film whose title is an anagram of the book, "Rocket Boys", on which it was based
37. Result of a sacrifice fly
38. What are found at the ends of the answers to the starred clues
39. Sigma neighbor
40. Leaning
42. "Still I Rise" poet Angelou
43. To you, in Toulouse
44. Genesis brother
45. * "A-one and a-two" bandleader
51. Survey option, often
52. Hit back and forth
56. Gardener's tool
57. * Eponym of a Midwest airport
60. Santa ___ winds
61. Incites
62. Detroit's county
63. An ace may fly over it
64. Start
65. Online bulletin board mgr.

DOWN

1. Comedian Mort
2. Jai ___
3. Cordial
4. Dutch city and province

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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17					18						19	
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51						52					53	54
55												
56				57	58	59						
60				61					62			
63				64					65			

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5. Super Bowl 50 MVP Manning
6. Raspberry source?
7. Arachnid legs, for instance
8. Tippler
9. Kipling's "Follow Me ___"
10. Lexus alternative
11. Early Guatemalan
12. Thomas of "That Girl"
13. Treatment for crow's feet
18. Boston skyscraper, informally, with "the"
22. One taking a gander
24. Torpedo vessel of WWII
25. With honor
26. Class with planes
27. Fill a vessel
28. Regarding
31. Bagel variety
32. Kind of duty
33. "How can I unhear that?", briefly
34. Part of the Hardee's logo
35. Deck
36. Chinese money
38. Clark Kent, for one
41. Part of TLC
42. Grab an opportunity, so to speak
44. Tolerates
45. Lindsay of "Freaky Friday"
46. Set right
47. Gluten source
48. Shake off
49. Booby prize winner
50. Old times, in old times
53. Happy cries
54. Cube inventor Rubik
55. Word with freeze or fry
58. Henley or Cheadle
59. That ___ interesting!

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1, or the face value of the paper. I agree not to ask for more than face value or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell

to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to:
contact@groundcovernews.com
734-707-9210



Bethlehem United Church of Christ

423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-665-6149

Bethlehem Church is the home of the Groundcover office

Sunday Worship Times

8:30 am and 10:00 am

Sunday school at 10:15 am

Fellowship Hour follows each service

February Pretzel sale dates

Please call the office to place your order

February 11

February 24

German Pretzel Sales, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
\$1 each or \$10 dozen. Call to place your order.
German Pretzel Sales, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.
\$1 each or \$10 dozen. Call to place your order.

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bethlehem-ucc.org

Home care and medical assistance for war vets and spouses

by Susan Beckett

When Mark Garland arranged care for his parents and Fred Moore cared for his grandmother, they discovered a little-known Veterans Administration (VA) benefit that they realized could help many others, as well as themselves. They teamed up with Mary Beth Ryan, cofounder and administrator of Veteran's Construction Communities Foundation (VCCF) and formed VCCF Home Care.

VCCF Home Care was started in July of 2015 to help veterans and their spouses to age in place by staying in their homes even when they are no longer able to be totally self-sufficient. Private-duty home care enables seniors to remain in their homes for as long as they are physically able. Without assistance, it is cost-prohibitive for most.

Though VCCF Home Care is new, its roots go back to the 1950s. Following the Korean War, President Harry Truman and Congress passed a law – still in effect today – called Title 38 to provide “Aid and Attendance” to war-era veterans and their spouses. These VA benefits include medical assistance and home care for elderly and disabled war veterans and their husbands or wives.



Left to right, Mark Garland, President of VCCF Home Care; Kevin Fuqua, Director of Operations; and Frederick Moore, Vice President of Field Operations.

(Many Korean soldiers suffered from extreme exposure to cold that resulted in debilitating arthritis, among other maladies.) Home care can include helping with eating, bathing and dressing as well as assistance with medication, light housekeeping and companionship.

To qualify for the home care benefit, the veteran must have served during a declared war and been on active duty

for at least 90 days – one day of which must have been during a declared-war era. The vet or spouse must have a demonstrable need for assistance as determined by a doctor and be unable to afford the assistance on their own. Financial need is determined by evaluating their means and expenses. (Their car and primary residence are excluded as assets as long as the resi-

dence does not include more than five acres of land.)

Garland and Moore never obtained the home care benefit for their family members. They were dismayed at how difficult it was to find and fill out the proper forms. Still, they pushed through to learn as much as they could about this program and decided to share with as many qualifying applicants as possible, especially since Garland and Moore are vets themselves. Both already had home care private duty businesses, so they had the experience and connections to address this underserved niche market.

VCCF Home Care spreads the word about this little-known benefit through presentations at senior centers, churches and community centers. It also partners with various private duty companies, in addition to social workers and hospital discharge planners – as well as advertises in the media. VCCF facilitates filling out the VA paperwork through one of its accredited agents and generally gets approval for the benefit within three to six months, compared to the six- to 18-month average wait for paperwork filled out by Veteran Ser-

see VCCF, page 10



VETERANS CONSTRUCTING COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION

www.vcc.foundation

**War era vets or their surviving spouses
entitled to private-duty home care at NO cost to them**

**Call VCCF at 586-200-2356
for assistance or more information**

Denial: not just a river in Egypt (Part One)

by Martin Stolzenberg
Groundcover Contributor

Probably the first deniers were late 15th-century folks who kept insisting the world was flat. Over 2,000 years prior, the smart Greeks had figured out the world was round by observing ships sailing over the horizon. It took Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan to finally prove them right to most. (The current leading flat-earth theory holds that the Earth is a disc with the Arctic Circle in the center and Antarctica, a 150-foot-tall wall of ice, around the rim. NASA employees, they say, guard this ice wall to prevent people from climbing over and falling off the disc.)

We could use another Columbus or Magellan now. The problem is that there are no ships to sail to disprove the tobacco industry, oil companies, soda companies or even the National Football League. These organizations are notoriously intent on disproving or denying the truth. Unlike the old-time deniers, though, the current crew has billions of dollars at stake in holding back progress.

The tobacco industry belongs to the modern deniers. Only about 140 cases

of lung cancer were known to have occurred in the year 1900. By 1920 it was clear that cigarette smoking was the primary culprit in the rising incidence of lung cancer. By the middle of the 20th century there were four converging pieces of evidence to establish cigarette smoking as the leading cause of lung cancer. These were population studies, animal experimentation, cellular pathology and chemicals in cigarettes.

From the 1930s through the 1950s, individual cigarette brands tried to address consumer concerns with misleading advertising like:

Camel: *"More doctors smoke Camels than any other brand,"* and *"Your T zone will tell you. T for taste and T for throat."*

Lucky Strike: *"It's toasted. Toasting removes dangerous irritants that cause throat irritation and coughing."*

Old Gold: *"Not a cough in a car-load."*

People were surmising that cigarette smoking wasn't a good thing. But still, in 1954 only 41 percent of consumers in a *Gallup* poll indicated that they be-

lieved cigarette smoking caused cancer. A 1960 poll of doctors found that only one-third of all physicians believed that cigarette smoking should be considered a major cause of cancer.

Then the industry came together to form the Tobacco Institute and the Tobacco Industry Research Committee/Council for Tobacco Research. Their 30 years of bogus research findings and disingenuous public statements were based on the premise that there are no

findings to indicate that cigarette smoking was injurious to health.

The industry was abetted by some of the largest public relations companies in the country, including Edelman Worldwide, Weber Shandwick, Fleischman-Hillard, and Burson Marsteller. These firms' work influenced reports, media and advertising campaigns, Congressional hearings, and state and local governments.

see DENIAL, page 11

VCCF Home Care

continued from page 9

vices Officers. There is never a charge for this service.

Once the benefit is approved, VCCF Home Care field representatives help find and manage the caregivers. They often hire a member of the veteran's own family, such as a responsible child or grandchild, or VCCF places one of its employees in the home. In some locations VCCF partners with established home care providers.

VCCF Home Care receives a small agency fee for managing or referring the caregiver. Profits from the business go back to the foundation to house more veterans. There is no obligation to use their caregiver services but nine out of 10 of those they help with the paperwork do ultimately choose to use their services, according to Moore.

Moore feels good about this business because helping seniors stay in their homes is in line with the mission of the foundation and the seniors' wishes, and also saves the country money since home care is less costly than an assisted living facility or nursing home. It is also a source of neighborhood jobs and enhances seniors' connectedness and quality of life. The caregivers and field managers are points of human contact that often develop into deeper relationships.

Moore sometimes has to dial back the clients' expectations. One recently complained to him, "My caregiver won't shovel my driveway. Will you replace her?"

He had to explain that light housekeeping does not extend to snow shoveling – that was not part of her job description.

On the other hand, he modified his own standards after reflecting on why one of his clients had him drive her to three stores to get items that could have all been purchased at any one of them. His original point of view was that the gas and time spent traveling from store to store more than outweighed the savings from shopping sale items. Eventually he realized that researching the sales and going to each store kept his client engaged in life and did fall within his caregiver responsibility to provide companionship as well as transportation. Serving as Pastor at the All Saints Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in Detroit has, no doubt, helped Moore empathize with his clients.

Interest in expanding in Washtenaw County is coming largely from Dan Ho, the Chief Financial Officer of VCCF Home Care, who lives in Ann Arbor. An internet entrepreneur, Ho was impressed by the company's mission and came onboard in February of 2016.




ANN ARBOR YMCA
400 West Washington Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103
www.annarborymca.org

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At the Y, we exist to strengthen community. Together with people like you, we nurture the potential of kids, help people improve their health, and provide opportunities to support our neighbors. So join our cause. And create meaningful change not just for your family, but also for your community.



WASHTENAW COUNTY
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
HOME IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Office of Community & Economic Development (OCED) has programs that can help eligible homeowners improve their homes by lowering energy bills, correcting code violations and making other repairs.

Furnace Test & Tune
OCED's Test & Tune Program helps your furnace run more efficiently, last longer, and operate safely. The program is implemented by Washtenaw County in partnership with the DTE Energy Efficiency Assistance Program.

Home Weatherization
OCED's Weatherization Program is designed to help residents lower their utility bills. The program is implemented through Washtenaw County in partnership with the US Department of Energy.

Work for both programs is completed by a licensed, approved contractor. OCED will monitor the work to ensure it is done correctly and within program guidelines.

Property taxes and house payments must be current; and household income must be within prescribed limits, based on family size.

Low interest loans and deferred payment loans are available based on income and individual needs.

FURNACE TEST & TUNE

FREE home improvements may include:

- Furnace or boiler tune-up, to help your heating system run more efficiently and last longer
- High efficiency furnace replacement
- Installation of water-saving faucets and shower aerators
- Installation of new energy-saving programmable thermostat

Eligibility based on household size and income:

1- \$46,000 annually	5- \$71,000 annually
2- \$52,600 annually	6- \$76,250 annually
3- \$59,150 annually	7- \$81,500 annually
4- \$65,700 annually	8- \$86,750 annually

Eligibility for LIHEAP, FAP, SSI, SER, TANF, WAP, THAW, or WIC establishes automatic eligibility.

Renters must obtain landlord approval.

HOME WEATHERIZATION

All homes receive a FREE:

- Weatherization audit to determine the most cost effective weatherization service(s)
- Safety inspection of combustion appliances (e.g. furnace, gas stove, water heater, etc.)

Free home improvement services may include:

- Furnace or refrigerator replacement
- Attic, wall and crawlspace insulation
- Air sealing of cracks and gaps

Eligibility based on household income. Households receiving Supplementary Security Income (SSI) automatically eligible.

Income limit by household size

1- \$23,740 annually	5- \$56,880 annually
2- \$32,040 annually	6- \$65,160 annually
3- \$40,320 annually	7- \$73,460 annually
4- \$48,600 annually	8- \$81,780 annually

Renters must obtain landlord approval. Mobile homes and multi-units are not eligible for the program.

FOR QUESTIONS
CALL 743.544.3008

VISIT US ONLINE
www.ewashtenaw.org/homerehab
www.ewashtenaw.org/weatherization

Denial: not just a river in Egypt

continued from page 10

Just to make sure they were covering all the bases, in 2010, there were 183 firms still lobbying Congress for the tobacco industry to the tune of over \$21 million in fees, according to *OpenSecrets.org*.

Scientists and senior executives at tobacco companies knew that there was a cancer risk from smoking as early as the 1940s, as cited in the *BMJ / Tobacco Control*. Further, "The 1964 landmark report, released by Surgeon General Dr. Luther Terry, was the first federal government report linking smoking and ill health, including lung cancer and heart disease."

This led in 1965 to the Surgeon General's warning on cigarette packages: "Caution: cigarette smoking may be hazardous to your health." Over the years this has been modified to be more explicit, listing the different ailments attributable to smoking. While the incidence of cigarette smoking has plummeted in the U.S., millions continue to smoke and die from this habit.

But as more and more evidence showed that smoking was harmful and a leading cause of cancer and heart disease, the companies began to introduce milder-tasting cigarettes, low-tar and nicotine brands, filtered cigarettes and menthol brands. They sought to induce consumers to think these products were less harmful.

There was a tremendous outpouring of public service advertising and medical information in the last 50 years regarding the danger of smoking. This didn't prevent four CEOs of tobacco companies in 1994 from answering they "believed no" to a Congressional Commit-

tee when asked if cigarette smoking was addictive. It came out years later that they all knew full well that nicotine was an addictive ingredient in cigarettes, but weren't legally accountable because they had said the contrary on record.

Finally, the weight of evidence about the dangers of smoking became so overwhelming that the tobacco industry agreed in 1998 to a *Master Settlement Agreement*. This agreement acknowledged that Big Tobacco would have to give \$280 billion to 46 states in an out-of-court settlement for the health problems caused by smoking. This was to reimburse the states for the expenses of caring for sick consumers through Medicare and Medicaid. Of course, nothing was given to the poor smokers, themselves, who had been turned into tobacco addicts by the reckless behavior of the companies. The tobacco industry also agreed to curtail certain marketing practices. In return, the companies were protected from ongoing and future litigation.

While the money was to be earmarked in part for smoker education and cessation programs, this didn't turn out to be the case. Most of the money received was primarily used by individual states to balance their general funds.

In the end, the tobacco companies didn't pay the \$280 billion, either. Current cigarette smokers paid because the companies promptly hiked the cost of a pack of cigarettes to cover the settlement costs, once an agreement was reached. What else would you expect? Did you really think the tobacco companies would pay the bill? Really.

Without a paycheck: Risk Taker

as told to La Shawn Courtwright
Groundcover Vendor #56

I used to walk down John R. Street awaiting the men that I'd become accustomed to. They looked for women to pick up who they would hire to purchase drugs from the neighborhood dealers. They would ask if I knew where they could score \$80 or more worth of drugs. I would score at least \$20 worth, because the size of the packages was equivalent to what they got from other dealers at the same cost. It was what they said was the best quality and quantity.

They stood out as targets to be ripped off because it was apparent that they were coming from the suburbs. They drove expensive cars and spent up to \$300 per day on their drugs. They were pretty regular and you could almost depend on them coming back on a daily basis around the same time.

I would use the extra money that I'd skimmed off of them to buy food and pay to stay at a flop house, where I would be a little safer than sleeping on the streets. I lived like this for about two years because it became easier than getting legitimate work. It was more lucrative than an average employer's wage and time requirement to earn less money.

Coming out of the wilderness

by La Shawn Courtwright
Groundcover Vendor #56

There are many facets to self-well-being. What I intend when I say this is: we are all at some point at the forefront of change, transitioning day-by-day further into newfound choices. Growing in life takes courage to be mindful of what it is and has been – to come out of the wilderness of unsurety to certainty.

I have begun to challenge myself to face adversity with enough graciousness to work and focus on being more receptive to the positives, and being able to recognize reasonability. As I look deeper into my character, I come to the idea that the things that move us to doubt, can or are the very subtleties that are easily overlooked.

Speaking of my fellowman, we are unique and, yet, so similar in many respects. We share a great degree of commonality, whether or not one may not be willing to agree on what is relevant. There is so much empowerment in knowing that there is more to agree on than to disagree. Life's a lot less about frivolous tasks when we apply energy and forethought to building versus tearing up, down, and apart the things we don't immediately comprehend.

7	2	4	1	9	8	5	6	3
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26	S	P	A	H	N	29	B	O	D	E					
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37	O	U	T	38	A	N	I	M	A	L	S	39	T	A	U
40	P	R	O	C	L	I	V	I	T	Y	42	M	A	Y	A
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56	H	O	E	57	E	D	59	W	A	R	D	O	H	A	R
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63	N	E	T	64	O	N	S	E	T	65	S	Y	S	O	P

Hour Glass

by Kay Geary
Groundcover Contributor

This is not a woman's figure this time,
It is not a glass with sand inside
Can you see what should have been mine?
Now that the days we had are behind
Not enough years to finish the picture,
Maybe we became poorer or richer
We came to bring more than less,
This Hour Glass of life should be my best!

GROUNDCOVER NEWS ADVERTISING RATES

Size	Black and White	Color	Approx. Size
Business card	\$49.95	\$65.95	3.5 X 2
1/8	\$89.95	\$129.95	2.5 X 6.5 or 5 X 3.25
1/6	\$129.95	\$165.95	5 X 5
1/4	\$159.95	\$215.95	5 X 6.5
1/2	\$299.95	\$399.95	5 X 14 or 10 X 6.5
Full Page	\$495.95	\$669.95	10 X 14

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Full Year/Twelve Issues: 35% off
Additional 20% off ads with coupons

Chocolate sheet cake

by Elizabeth Bauman
Groundcover Contributor

Ingredients

Batter:

2 cups sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup butter, cubed
1/4 cup baking cocoa
1 cup water
2 eggs
1/2 cup buttermilk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract



Icing:

1/2 cup butter, cubed
1/4 cup baking cocoa
1/3 cup milk
2 cups confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup chopped walnuts

Directions

Combine the first four ingredients in a bowl and set aside. In a small saucepan, bring butter, cocoa and water to a boil. Immediately remove from the heat and add to dry batter ingredients. Mix well.

In a small bowl, beat eggs. Add buttermilk and vanilla; mix well. Stir into set-aside cocoa mixture. Pour into a greased 15x10x1-inch baking pan. Bake at 375° for 20-22 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. As the cake is baking bring the butter, cocoa and milk to a boil in a small saucepan, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; add sugar and vanilla, and mix well. Spread icing over hot cake and immediately sprinkle with nuts. Cool completely on a wire rack.

Yield: 16-20 servings. My Grandma Shields brought this to every family gathering. Your Valentine will love it! Delicious with vanilla ice cream.

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Strange (but Mostly True) Stories About a Mother and her Daughter • Cy Klone © 2017

I'm beginning to question my obsession with human scents. Here I am drawn to his pristine, slightly-damp, just-washed socks, with no trace of his scent at all!

Perhaps even clean socks now symbolically represent your obsession with his scent?

Even so, I really may have a problem after all. When I tear myself away from them they silently beckon me to return and roll on them.

Socks are perfect scent-holders. Maybe you like the way they pick up your scent. Ever think of that?

I - I don't know. Either way the pull is magnetic.... I....can't....resist....much...longer...

Get it together mom or it'll be time for sock rehab!

Must....not....give....in....Must.... reach....transporter....room....

You're such a drama queen. Admit it: you love his socks more than you love him!